

Claim Listing

Please amend the claims as set forth in the following claim listing, which replaces all the pending claims.

1. (Currently Amended) ~~An encapsulated~~ A formulation comprising ~~a substantially water-free mixture of~~ probiotic bacteria with monovalent alginate salts, wherein the ~~mixture~~ formulation has a water activity of between 0.01-0.07, and wherein, upon exposure to an acidic environment, an alginic acid gel is formed which shields the probiotic bacteria from the antibiotic effects of the acidic environment. s been formed and is maintained in a substantially water-free environment.
2. (Currently Amended) ~~The encapsulated formulation of claim 1 wherein the water activity is between 0.01-0.~~ The formulation of claim 1 which does not include of alginate salts of divalent metals, in quantities such that the shielding alginic acid gel does not form.
3. (Currently Amended) ~~The encapsulated~~ formulation of claim 2 1 wherein the water activity is 0.028 or less.
4. (Currently Amended) ~~The encapsulated~~ formulation of claim 1 wherein the monovalent alginate salts are sodium alginate or potassium alginate.
5. (Currently Amended) ~~The encapsulated~~ formulation of claim 1 wherein the probiotic bacteria is from the *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacterium* genera..

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6. (Currently Amended) The ~~encapsulated~~ formulation of claim 1 wherein ~~following formation of the mixture of~~ formulation reacts with acidic environment to generate alginic acid.
7. (canceled)
8. (Currently Amended) The ~~encapsulated~~ formulation of claim 1 which is encapsulated and wherein the capsule materials are made of gelatin, cellulose or a derivative of cellulose.
9. (Currently Amended) The ~~encapsulated~~ formulation of claim 8 wherein the capsule materials are made of gelatin, cellulose or a derivative of cellulose and wherein the capsule materials do not include any alginates salts in them.
10. (Currently Amended) The ~~encapsulated~~ formulation of claim 1 wherein the alginate salt is dried to a moisture content below 5% prior to mixing with probiotic bacteria.
11. (Currently Amended) The ~~encapsulated~~ formulation of claim ~~1~~ 8 wherein the probiotic bacteria are present at a concentration of 10^7 to 10^{11} cfu per capsule ~~or tablet~~.
12. (Currently Amended) The ~~encapsulated~~ formulation of claim 3 wherein the weight ratio of sodium alginate ~~to water free mixture~~ in the formulation is 10-99%.
13. (Currently Amended) The ~~encapsulated~~ formulation of claim 11 wherein the weight ratio of sodium alginate ~~to water free mixture~~ in the formulation is 20% to 60%.
14. (canceled)
15. (canceled)
16. (canceled)
17. (canceled)
18. (canceled)
19. (canceled)
20. (canceled)
21. (canceled)
22. (canceled)
23. (canceled)

- 24. (canceled)
- 25. (canceled)
- 26. (canceled)
- 27. (canceled)

28. (Newly added) The formulation of claim 1 including grapeskin extract.

29. (Newly added) The formulation of claim 2 wherein the alginate salts of divalent metals are magnesium alginate or calcium alginate.